

Message Text

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ACTION EA-09

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 IO-13 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4401

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C O N F I D E N T I A L PARIS 25038

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, KN, KS, US

SUBJECT: REACTIONS TO PANMUNJOM INCIDENT: FRANCE

REF: STATE 211862

1. COVERAGE. FRENCH MISSIONS ABROAD HAVE REPORTED FULLY TO QUAI ON ALL ASPECTS OF PANMUNJOM INCIDENT. AFP HAS SHOWN SIMILAR INTEREST IN INCIDENT AND FRENCH PRESS HAS GIVEN CONSIDERABLE SPACE TO INCIDENT WITH DAILY ARTICLES.

2. CHARACTER OF REPORTING. FRENCH PRESS AS WELL AS DIPLOMATIC MISSIONS HAVE REPORTED ACCURATELY, AND REPORTS, WHILE QUOTING NORTH KOREAN STATEMENTS, COME DOWN IN FAVOR OF US VIEW OF THE EVENTS AND GENERALLY OF THE CONCLUSIONS WE HAVE DRAWN (WITH THE USUAL EXCEPTION OF THE PRESS OF THE FAR LEFT).

3. APPRAISAL OF DPRK INTENTIONS. MANY HAVE CONCLUDED THAT NORTH KOREA EMBARKED ON THIS VENTURE IN ORDER TO STIMULATE WORLD INTEREST IN KOREA AT THE TIME OF THE NON-ALIGNED CONFERENCE AND BEFORE THE UNGA. EVEN NORMALLY-SKEPTICAL "LE MONDE" CONCLUDED THIS WAS DELIBERATE NORTH KOREAN PROVOCATION. SOME QUAI
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OFFICIALS THINK THE ATTACK WAS COMPLETELY PREMEDITATED

BY DPRK AND THAT IT BRINGS EVEN MORE INTO QUESTION THE
SANITY OF KIM IL SUNG. THE BRUTALITY AND SENSELESSNESS
OF THE ACT HAS SURPRISED MOST FRENCH.

4. EFFECT ON KOREAN ISSUE AT UN. FRENCH BELIEVE WORLD
REACTION HAS BEEN MORE NEGATIVE TOWARD NORTH KOREA THAN
PYONG YANG ANTICIPATED AND HENCE THE SLIGHT MODERATION
IN TOME OF THE KIM MESSAGE. WE UNDERSTAND QUAI FEELS
THAT THE INCIDENT WILL, IN THE CASE OF MOST COUNTRIES,
NOT CHANGE VOTES ON THE KOREAN ISSUE IN THE UNGA.
SUPPORTERS OF THE DPRK, EVEN THOSE WHO BELIEVE THAT
NORTH KOREA WAS THE AGGRESSIVE FACTOR IN THE PANMUNJOM
INCIDENT, WILL CONTINUE TO SUPPORT THE DPRK FOR
OTHER REASONS. THE FRENCH THINK IT IMPORTANT TO
IDENTIFY THE FEW EXCEPTIONS AND TO CONTACT THEIR
REPRESENTATIVES, PARTICULARLY TO MAKE SURE THAT THEY
DO NOT COME TO THE CONCLUSION THAT DESPITE THE DPRK
FAULT IN THIS CASE, THE INCIDENT PROVES THE DANGER
INHERENT IN THE CURRENT SITUATION IN KOREA AND THE
REASONABLENESS OF THE DPRK PROPOSAL TO DISSIPATE THE
DANGER.
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